

Article - Real Property

[\[Previous\]](#)[\[Next\]](#)

§8–212.4.

(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) “Dwelling unit” means that portion of a building that is designated, intended, or arranged for use or occupancy as a residence by one or more persons, including a rented room in a single-family house.

(3) “Landlord” means:

(i) An owner of residential rental property that offers two or more dwelling units for rent on one parcel; or

(ii) A person acting on behalf of a landlord.

(4) “Master meter” means a meter used to measure, for billing purposes, all usage of a particular utility for a landlord’s residential rental property, including usage for common elements of the residential rental property and dwelling units.

(5) “Ratio utility billing system” means allocation of one or more of a landlord’s utility charges, collected via a master meter, among the tenants by any method that does not measure actual per-tenant usage for the utility.

(6) “Utility” means:

(i) Electricity usage;

(ii) Gas usage;

(iii) Wastewater and sewage disposal service usage; or

(iv) Water consumption or usage.

(b) This section does not apply to residential rental property in:

(1) A condominium organized under Title 11 of this article; or

(2) A cooperative project organized under Title 5, Subtitle 6B of the Corporations and Associations Article.

(c) (1) If a landlord uses a ratio utility billing system to bill tenants for one or more utilities, the landlord shall provide the following information to all prospective tenants in writing:

(i) A statement that the tenant will be billed by the landlord for allocated utility services and that identifies all utilities at issue;

(ii) A copy of the last two utility bills issued to the landlord;

(iii) A description of the method that will be used to allocate the cost of the utility to the tenant, by utility;

(iv) A statement that any disputes relating to the computation of the tenant's bill are between the tenant and the landlord;

(v) The average monthly bill for all dwelling units in the residential rental property in the previous calendar year, by utility;

(vi) A statement that the tenant has the right to inspect records retained by the landlord that document a bill for utilities on written request;

(vii) Information regarding any additional service charges or administrative fees to be paid by the tenant for the operation of the ratio utility billing system; and

(viii) A citation to this section.

(2) A lease provision that requires a tenant to pay the utility charges billed to the tenant under a ratio utility billing system shall be unenforceable if the landlord fails to provide the information required under paragraph (1) of this subsection to the tenant in writing.

(d) A landlord who uses a ratio utility billing system shall, on written request by a tenant, allow a tenant to inspect records retained by the landlord that document a bill for utilities.

(e) (1) A county or municipal corporation may enact local laws consistent with this section governing:

(i) The information a landlord is required to provide to a tenant;

(ii) Disclosure requirements; and

(iii) Document retention policies.

(2) Any local law or ordinance that is comparable in subject matter to this section shall supersede the provisions of this section to the extent that the local law or ordinance is more stringent or provides stronger protection or broader applicability than this section.

[\[Previous\]](#)[\[Next\]](#)